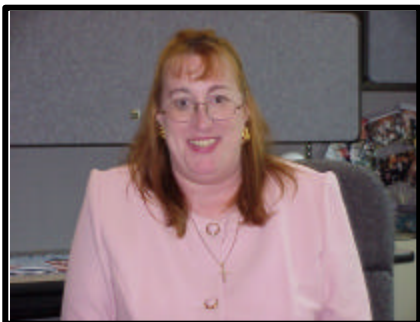




**September 2003**



***FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR—***

**BY JILL AVERY**

***NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT  
AWARENESS MONTH***



**October** marks National Disability Employment Awareness Month, a federally recognized observance that calls attention to the issues people with disabilities face, particularly in employment. According to the United States Census Bureau, there are over 400,000 individuals with disabilities in Iowa. Some of these individuals are employed, but a disproportionate number are not employed. This month is a time for us to reflect upon the millions of Americans with disabilities who are qualified, willing and ready to join the workforce.

According to a recent study, the United States needs 1.3 million new workers in the field of information technology alone by the year 2006. Technology can be a liberator for persons with

disabilities who can fill many of these jobs. The world of telecommunications will make it easier for those with disabilities to hold well-paid jobs and make a valuable contribution to our economy. Other examples of technology assisting persons with disabilities in the workplace include the ability for people who are blind to read e-mail/electronic communication, individuals who are deaf accessing video-conferencing and persons with some neurological conditions using flat, enlarged computer screens and provisions for natural lighting in their workspace. Typically, many reasonable accommodations can be made for less than \$300.00.

Let's continue to work toward an inclusive society that values everyone's abilities and contributions. I urge you to join us in embracing individuals with disabilities in the workplace.

- *J ill*



## ***The Annual Governors Awards Banquet***

***By***

***Becky Danilson***



Good news! The Division of Person's with Disabilities and the **"Friend's" of the Commission of Persons with**

**Disabilities** will be having their Annual Awards Banquet in October. The banquet will be held Tuesday, October 21<sup>st</sup> at the West Des Moines Marriott with social hour beginning at 5:30 p.m. Dinner will be served at 6:00 p.m. with the awards ceremony starting after dinner around 7:00 p.m. If you are interested in attending please contact Becky Danilson at 1-888-219-0471.

Hope to see you there!

## ***Iowa Rehabilitation Association Fall Conference - Harlietta Helland***

A variety of speakers have been selected to teach, inform, motivate and entertain participants at the 42nd annual conference of the Iowa Rehabilitation Association. For information or registration assistance, call Jean Saner at 515-281-1364. The conference will be held in Marshalltown at the Best Western Regency Inn starting on October 22nd with a noon luncheon. Between speakers and social functions there is a lot of opportunity to network with rehabilitation service providers. The three-day event



will feature discussions on reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act, status of the court cases and the Americans with Disabilities Act, best practices in working with a variety of disabilities, and allow participants to learn, grow and develop skills to better serve Iowans with disabilities.



**Rehabilitation**



## **YLF – FIFTH YEAR OF CONFERENCE A SUCCESS!**

**T**wenty-nine Iowa high school junior's and senior's attended the 2003 Iowa Youth Leadership Forum this summer. The forum was held from July 27<sup>th</sup> through August 1<sup>st</sup> on the ISU campus. The delegates stayed in Friley Hall and used the meeting rooms in the new Eaton Hall to conduct the large group and small group sessions.



The week started for the staff and alumni at the alumni picnic, which was held on Saturday, July 26<sup>th</sup> in Ames at

Brookside Park. Hy-Vee Food Stores of Ames provided a tasty spread of burgers, hotdogs, brats, potato salad, chips, baked beans, and soft drinks. It was quite a picnic! Old and new alumni became reacquainted, touched bases and caught up on where everyone was and what they were doing.

Staff training followed the picnic. The staff trained long and hard for their responsibilities as counselors and role models. Much of the training involved going over the content of the workbook and their understanding of the YLF tenets for each session and module, as follow through is important to the success of the forum. They also spent many hours in their own assigned groups becoming familiar with each student delegate's file and specific needs so that each delegate can get the most out of every small group session and from each presenter.

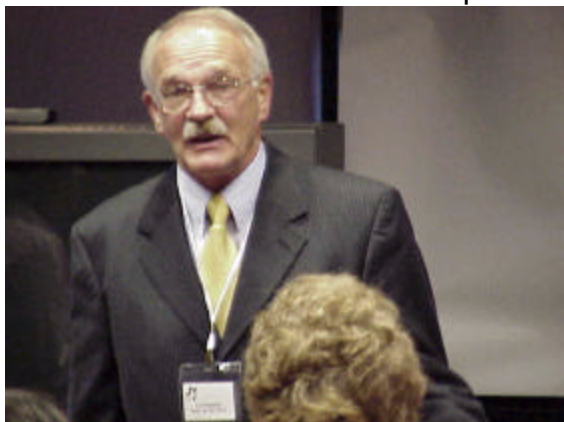
The student delegates arrived on Sunday afternoon to check in and were then escorted by YLF staff to their rooms where they could unpack. Next, the delegates were guided to Eaton Hall where the Welcome room was set up in a Hawaiian theme. Refreshments were offered and this was the time set aside to say goodbye to their parents. This year we were fortunate to have Alan and Connie Cooper serve as alumni parents to help make the transition easier as students and parents parted ways for five full days. For many parents and delegates this is their first experience at being away from each other and being with other students with disabilities.

After a fine lasagna dinner catered by the ISU food service, the first session began. The session is geared towards teaching the students about the history of the Americans with Disabilities Act, what life was like before the Act, what their roles and responsibilities are now, as well as learning about the culture of disability. Kicking off the program was Kenda Jochimsen, Bureau Chief from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation





Services. Kenda challenged the students to do the following four things: to dream, to believe in your dreams, and get others to believe as well, to make their journey fun and to laugh a lot, and to remember to celebrate. Next to present was Carl Shawhan, from the Iowa Department for the Blind. Carl showed a short video from our own Senator Tom Harkin who welcomed the students and gave his own account of the history of the ADA and he urged the students to learn as much as they can from their YLF experience.



Carl then addressed the students about many historical perspectives concerning disabilities and the culture of disabilities. It was a great way to start off the forum and several students said that this was their first exposure to the laws and tools that help to protect their rights and to ensure that their desire to become employed young lowans becomes a reality. We finished the evening with a funeral for the phrase "I can't" and each delegate had a chance to educate everyone about his or her own disability. We learned a lot on Sunday. Later that evening as the delegates divided into small groups, they chose their names that each group would use for the duration of the forum. Group 1 named themselves "Determined Delegates" and soon became "D Squared", group 2 named themselves the "League of



Extraordinary People", and group 3 dubbed themselves the "Shooting Stars".

These small groups, or sessions, are placed throughout the week in between the large group sessions and presenters, enabling the students and staff counselors to dialogue about each large group presentation, to talk about issues relating to transition, self-advocacy, goal achievement, their own disabilities, and writing out a life plan. The small group sessions are also an intimate way for each delegate to get personalized attention from the staff, which in almost every case is an alumnus of YLF, they also serve as bonding experience where they are safe to explore their own disability and have the freedom to dialogue about where they are now and where they are going.

Monday morning started with a



presentation on self-advocacy, college, civic duty, and employment by Missouri State Senator Bryan Pratt. After lunch the delegates had the opportunity to



learn the Seven Habits of Successful Teenagers by Erik "Aces" Anderson and were entertained by his Old West huckster alter ego. The evening brought on the Talent Show, as many of the delegates had already prepared a skit or talent before the forum. Each group had the opportunity to perform together as part of the bonding process and the staff and students had a good time learning about each other's talents and gifts. Tuesday morning brought the delegation a visit from Chrystal Stanley, Academic Assistance Specialist from Drake University and Becky Ludwig, District Manager for the K-mart Corporation. Chrystal engaged the students about life in college, what to expect and how to prepare for both the academic aspects but also for the social aspects. Becky gave an informative presentation on working for a larger corporation, complete with a demonstration on completing an application and what to do and say during and after an interview.



After lunch Sgt. Dave Murillo talked to

the delegates about all phases of law enforcement and gave the students tips on staying safe as they transition from their high school communities into the workforce or on to college. We had a reprieve from the dorm food Tuesday evening as we dined at the restaurants in the Memorial Union. Following dinner, Mike Hoenig from the Center for Disabilities and Development in Iowa City spoke to the delegates about the role of self-advocacy and how important it is for them to learn good self-advocacy skills. After Mike's talk, we went to the recreation area of the Union where the students bowled, played pool, air hockey, foosball, along with a variety of arcade games and just had some fun sponsored by the Friends of the Commission of Persons with Disabilities.

Wednesday, the 3 busses to take the group to Des Moines, showed up at 7:15am and boarding began at 7:30am. Our first stop was the state Capitol where many students were met by their representative or senator and given a



private tour. Of those who were able to attend were Senators Stew Iverson and Herman Quirmbach, and Representatives Jack Drake, Doug Struyk, Swati Dandekar, Wayne Ford, Chuck Gipp, and Lisa Heddons. The other delegates enjoyed a tour provided by the excellent guides of our state Capitol. Following the tour Secretary of



State, Chet Culver, spoke to the students about voting, civil duties, community involvement and leadership. Lunch was provided by the good folks at Dahl's on Fleur Drive of Des Moines. Following lunch the busses took us to the Iowa Air National Guard, where Vice-Commander



Steve Van Every and Lt. Col. Dyann Edwards gave a tour of the facility. The delegates were then privileged to view an up-close and very impressive take off of six F-16 fighter jets. We boarded the buses and headed back to Ames for dinner, but we were not done for the day. Frank Strong of CICIL presented to the delegates, following dinner, on job seeking and interviewing skills. All of the students had a great time roll playing and learning about different interviewing techniques and situations.

Thursday the student delegates learned about healthy relationships and sexuality during the morning presentation. Mid morning, they then made their way to the Memorial Union to meet with their mentors for the afternoon. Over 85 students, mentors and staff met over lunch to discuss what the delegates had learned at the forum and what they were going to do afterwards. After lunch, Bea Awoniyi from the ISU Disabilities Resources Academic Center gave all a presentation on high and low assistive technology. The students came away with many excellent examples of how technology can assist them as they



transition into the work place and on to college. After dinner the delegates and staff decorated for the final party, the last big event of the forum. T-shirts were signed, addresses and emails were exchanged and everyone had a great time their last night on campus dancing to the music provide by disc jockey, John Lee-Eagan.



Friday morning came early and the students and staff wrapped up all of the things that they had been working on in their small group sessions. With their life plan written, their workbooks completed, and their letters of encouragement written and addressed to themselves ready to be mailed by our office at a later date, the delegates are



ready to greet their parents after a five-day break. The students met up with their parents at the Memorial Union armed with what they had learned over the week. A resource fair was assembled for the students and parents to use as a starting place gather information to take back to their communities. Following the resource fair lunch was served for the delegates, families and guests. After a splendid cornucopia of meats, cheeses, salads, breads, fresh fruits and vegetables, all

were welcomed by Dr. Ruth White, Director for the Department of Human Rights. Dr. White also introduced Kimberly Baxter, the newly appointed Administrator for the Status of African Americans who welcomed the students and families as well. The program ended with the groups going up to the microphone and each delegate having the opportunity to talk about what they had learned for the week. Some of their quotes are as follows:

"I thought Mike Hoenig's message on self-advocacy was very important, and my mentor gave me lots of ideas about improving my life. I learned that I can do stuff on my own and I can make something of myself. Knowing how to apply for a job. The Habits of Becoming a Successful teen, having an expert from Drake University."

"What I learned at YLF was that I have many opportunities to be anything for my future life, and it made me ready to show others that there are no barriers in the road to life if we use our full effort to achieve!"



"The importance of self-advocacy, I learned about Government laws that have been passed to help people with disabilities."

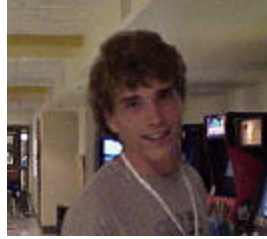
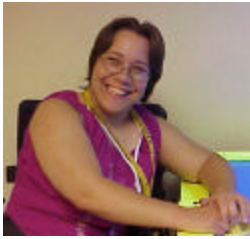
"That there are a lot of things you can do even though you have barriers"

"To stand up and believe in yourself."

"I never realized that I need to be assertive for what my accommodations for college and work will be to fulfill my satisfaction"

"I am more enthusiastic and focused on what I want to do in my life"

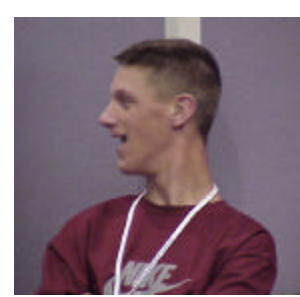
"I will be more verbal about my needs. Asking for more help and not being shy about it. When people make fun of me, I will just walk away."



"To not be afraid just because I have a disability or because I am different. I will live a normal life and be a leader and believe in myself."

"I met friends at YLF, and I never realized that everybody with disabilities can succeed if they believe in themselves! It was hard to believe!! I had a lot of fun. This was a great experience and am glad I got to be a part of it."

"I think the forum was very well put together. I don't think all of the benefits of it will be apparent right away but it will happen."



"I NEED TO START GROWING UP, I AM GOING TO BE IN COLLEGE, I NEED TO START DOING STUFF FOR MYSELF, INSTEAD OF ALWAYS RELYING ON FRIENDS OR FAMILY, AND THE OTHER ONE IS, ALL OF US ARE THE STRONGEST PEOPLE, NOT BY PHYSICALLY STRONG, BUT CHARACTER. THAT'S WHAT REALLY COUNTS IN LIFE IS CHARACTER!"

### Mentor Luncheon and Capitol Visit Pictures



Joe Lewis and Loren Woods



Artie Sciortino and Al Bibbens





Senator Jack Drake and P.J. Wegner



Senator Herman Quirmbach and  
Representative Lisa Heddons  
with several constituents



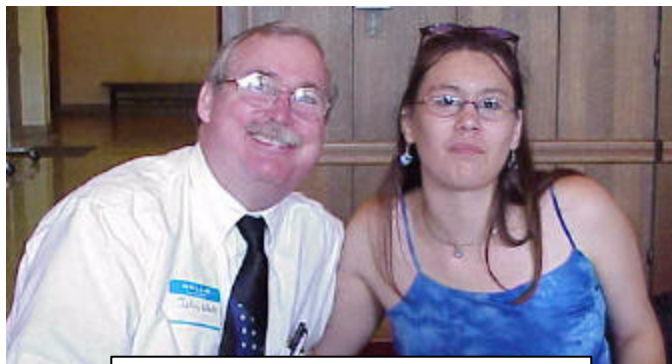
Sharon Hendricks and Jackie Wade



Cali Kenworthy and Steph Hill



Ted Parker and Paul Krupko



John Wade and Arielle Hansen



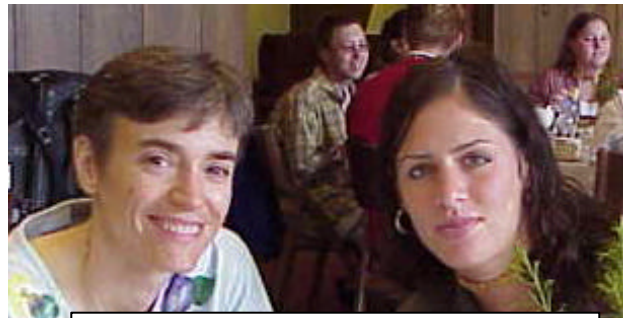
Laura Prien and Bob Jepsen



Kelsey Stump and Frank Strong



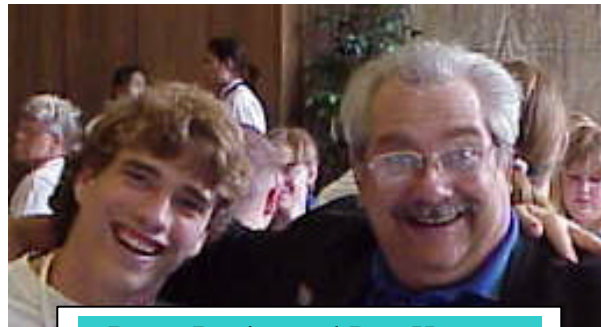
Garvice Brannon and Carol Sharp



Sheila O'Neal and Lindsay Morelock



Lindsey Ford and Johnathan Newberg



Bryce Devine and Dan Harmon



Tim Gracey and Sherri Joshua



Mack Fuller and Chad Morton

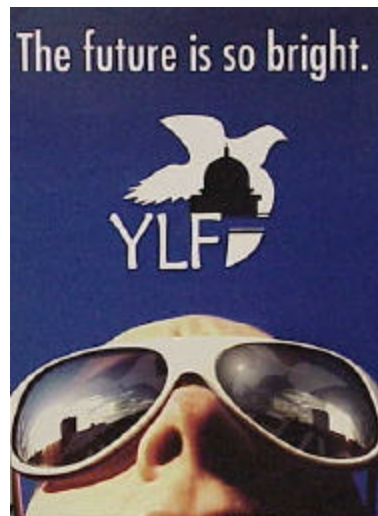




Natalie Davidson and Karen Ackerman



Caleb Michel and Gene VanGrevenhoff



**Many thanks to all of the sponsors who have offered assistance to this year's YLF.**



*Dahl's Food Marts*





***Friends of Iowa Civil Rights, Inc. Announces  
Statewide Diversity Conference***



On Monday, September 29, 2003, Friends of Iowa Civil Rights, Inc., will present a full day diversity conference, Iowa's Mosaic. The conference, held at the Scheman Center on the Iowa State University Campus in Ames, promises to offer unique opportunities to not only learn more about the wealth of diversity that exists in Iowa, but also to learn how to benefit through diversity in your personal life, work and community.

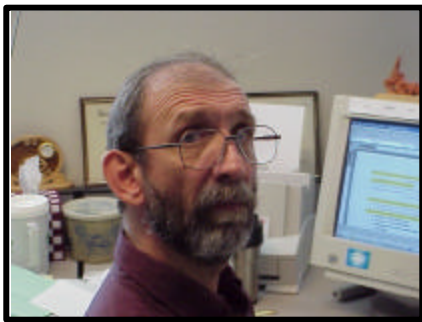
Headlining the conference are Emmy Award winning and native Iowan, Greg Alan Williams, and nationally recognized corporate advisor, T. Hensley "Ted" Williams. Also, presenting their acclaimed interactive theatrical piece, "UnColor", is the Iowa-based Graffiti Theatre Company. Stigma Busters, another performing troupe, will present during the lunch hour. All presenters will deliver messages of inspiration and introspection.

There will be numerous exhibits showcasing the benefits of diversity. They will be promoting activities and events, distributing free promotional materials, and, of course, offer one-on-one informal interaction.

The workshops will cover issues under four primary tracks: Family, Business, Community, and Youth. Awareness and promotion for the conference is statewide, involving communities across Iowa. The conference will attempt to explore how to make our state richer and more diverse. These workshops will help us focus on human rights issues along with addressing other diversity concerns. Threading through it all, our continuing goal is to help leaders of communities (corporate, geographic or organizational) assess unique local needs, address those needs, and build action plans to find solutions.

Registration for the conference is \$75, and registration materials are available on-line at [www.iowadiversity.org/conference/index.html](http://www.iowadiversity.org/conference/index.html) Contact Alice Vinsand for a hard copy of registration materials or if you have questions: 515-225-1051, 800-264-1084, [alice@avinsandinc.com](mailto:alice@avinsandinc.com).

**For more information, visit:** <http://www.iowadiversity.org/conference/index.html>.



## ***THE A-TEAM IN IOWA***

**John TenPas**

As a result of the DOL Work Incentive Grant should be that lowans with disabilities notice a change not only in term of facilities but also in the delivery of services at One-Stop Workforce Centers across Iowa. The Division of Persons with Disabilities along with other state agencies and the Drake Rehabilitation Institute served as a member of the Assistive Technology Team or "A-Team" within the grant. The team was able to conduct an on-site visit to 13 of 16 Workforce Regions in Iowa.

The "A-Team" provided a comprehensive review of access and technology needs of the "One-Stop" Workforce Centers across Iowa. The A-Team were able to identify not only physical and communication barriers as well as technology and make recommendations that enhance services of Iowa One-Stop Workforce Centers to lowans with Disabilities. How do I know this, because I have been involved in this effort from the beginning. However, the only why we will truly know how accessible your local Iowa Workforce Center is, is if you avail yourself of their many services. So, if you are looking for a job or better yet, a career, why not visit your local Iowa Workforce Center. And, if you like share your experience with us. E-mail us at [dhrr.disabilities@dhrr.state.ia.us](mailto:dhrr.disabilities@dhrr.state.ia.us)

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